

OUTDOOR GAMES

SQUIRRELS IN THE TREE

Grade: 1 - 2

Skills: Running, chasing, tagging, dodging

Equipment: None

Set up: Divide the class into groups of three. Two of three players in each group grab hands to form an open area (tree) for the squirrel (third player) to stand in. There is one player chosen to be "It." If there are extra players, they can also be squirrels, which will make the game more challenging.

Play: At the teacher's signal, the squirrels leave their tree and try to run to another tree before "It" can tag them. If "It" does not tag anyone in a reasonable amount of time designate a new "It." Change players around so that everyone gets to be both squirrels and trees.

GO BEHIND

Grade: 3 - 8

Skills: Running, chasing, tagging, dodging

Equipment: None

Set up: Pair up two-thirds of the class. The other one-third are free players. One player in the pair is to stand behind their partner and hold them by the waist. The back player controls the pair; his or her goal is to keep anyone else from latching onto his or her waist.

Play: At the teacher's signal, the free players attempt to grab onto the back of a pair. If a free player manages to grab onto the back of a pair, he or she takes over at the back of the pair and the front player in the pair becomes a free player. If not enough players are successful at grabbing on, break up a few pairs to increase the number of free players.

PARTNER HOOK-UP TAG

Grade: 3 - 6

Skills: Running, chasing, dodging

Equipment: None

Set up: Divide the class into pairs. The partners form a circle with space between each set of partners. Designate one player as the chaser and another as the chatee.

Play: This activity adds a new dimension to the game of tag. The object of the game is for the chatee to run in and out of the circle, and before being tagged by the chaser, to hook up with a set of partners. When the chatee hooks up with a set of partners, the outside person must run and is now the chatee. If the chaser tags the chatee before s/he hooks up, s/he becomes the chaser and the chaser becomes the chatee. If the chaser is "It" for a long period of time and gets tired, choose someone to take his/her place.

BROWNIES AND ELVES

Grade: 1 - 2

Skills: Running, chasing, tagging, dodging

Equipment: none

Set up: Divide the class into two teams of equal size. Set up two goal lines a distance apart. Have one team (brownies) line up side-by-side at one goal line, and the other team (elves) line up side-by-side at the other goal line.

Play: The elves stand with their backs to the brownies. Silently, the brownies creep up on the elves and stand behind them. The leader of the brownies calls out, "Run, brownies run." The brownies run back to their goal line while the elves turn around and chase the brownies, trying to tag them. Any brownies tagged must go back with the elves to their goal line. Then it is the elves' turn to creep up on the brownies. The team having the most players at the end of the time period is the winner.

Variation: Continue to have the brownies creep up on the elves until all the brownies have been tagged, then start a new game with the brownies and elves changing roles.

RUN, RABBIT, RUN

Grade: 1 - 6

Skills: Running, chasing, dodging, tagging, movement

Equipment: None

Set up: All except two students line up side by side at one goal line. The two students, who are the hunters, stand in the center of the playing area.

Play: The game begins with the hunters calling out a way to move (for example, "Run, Rabbit, Run" "Hop, rabbit, hop.") The students must perform that movement across the playing area to the other goal line. The hunters must use the same movement. If one of the hunters tags a rabbit, the rabbit must stand in that spot. The rabbits that are tagged may try to tag the other rabbits as they go by, but must keep their feet still. When all but two rabbits are caught, a new game is started. The last two rabbits are the new hunters or they can choose someone else to be the hunter.

CARS

Grade: 3 - 4

Skills: running, dodging, tagging

Equipment: None

Set up: Students line up side by side along one goal line. Choose one player to be "It," and have him/her stand in the center.

Play: The player who is "It" decides on four kinds of cars (for example, Porsche, BMW, Firebird, and Jaguar). S/he tells the class the four kinds of cars, and one of the car names, all of the students who chose that car attempt to run to the other side without being tagged. Then "It" calls out another car name. This continues until s/he has called all four types of cars. You can either have those tagged stand in the spot where they were tagged or they can help "It" tag others. When only one player is left, begin a new game. That player can be "It" or choose someone else to be "It."

CATCH THE DRAGON'S TAIL

Grade: 2 - 8

Skills: Running, chasing, dodging, pulling a flag belt

Equipment: Flag football belts, any color, one for each student

Set up: Have all students put on the flag belt (buckle in the front, flags on each side and one in the back). The flag belt should be on top of all other clothing. Students should be in their own personal space within the playing area.

Play: At the teacher's signal, all students start chasing each other and try to pull anyone's flag belt off. The object is to pull the most belts while avoiding getting your own belt pulled. At the end of time (determined by the teacher's whistle) see who has their own belt still on and who has collected the most belts.

Variation: Have the boys pull only girls, girls pull boys, girls pull girls, boys pull boys. Have the students pair up and if the partner pulls a flag they may choose to give it to their partner to put back on. Or have the students team up according to their belt color.

SLEDDING

Grade: ALL

Skills: ability to have fun

Equipment: large plastic trash bags, scissors

Set up: Cut three holes in the trash bag for the student's head and both arms.

Play: Climb any hill, big or small, and have the students slide down the hill on their stomachs. Stand up, stop laughing, climb the hill again and repeat. Continue until time is up or you can't climb the hill anymore because of the laughter.